Below are some statements, written by David-Baptiste Chirot, concerning his own thoughts, procedures and practice in relation to Visual Poetry.

Selections from Statements re Various Aspects of Working with RubBEings and Clay Impression Spray Paintings—

(with some comments in the present added--)

I began making rubBEings in Spring 1999. Walking a great deal, finding materials to bring home to use—I realized I was already in an immense work room—surrounded by letterings, words, signs—that I could copy on site and make arrangements from directly. Immediately I purchased a lumber crayon and cheap note pad and the rubBEings became not only part of daily life but of my dreams and memories as well.

RubBEings may well be the oldest form of copy art. Rearranging found signs and letterings, one arrives at visual poems that emerge from the existent materials. By moving from site to site, one is collaging, combining scattered elements to juxtapose and create new arrangements.

The Poetry of the Found, everywhere to be Found.

All my work is made with a profound faith in the encounter with the Found, everywhere and at all times to be Found all around one.

Like Picasso, I work with the sense that "I do not seek, I find."

The poet Paul Celan wrote: "Poetry no longer imposes itself, it exposes itself."

The Found is that which exposes itself, and with which one works via an uncanny encounter, a call and response, a shock of recognition, out of which collaboration emerges an Other, which is the BEing in/with rubBEing.

For this way of working, Conceptual Poetry is not imposed into or on to a work, it is not a Conception from the mind alone, but one that emerges via touch, seeing, hearing, contact with the site/sight/cite with which one is working.

In much of my work with rubBEings and clay impression spray paintings, what emerges is a notation of what Basho called the basis of art--"change in the universe."

Language as material is not solid, but is disintegrating via the flows of time, weather, the effects of man made interventions, including War, as in the seres of "Wall" paintings and works.

This is a fugitive language, hidden in plain site/sight/cite, "over looked," vanishing into its forms of the next moment in the flow.

Rather than "Conceptualize" it, one finds oneself encountering and

working with its ever shifting forms in the flows of Time.

In order to express "ideas" in pieces done with such an intention, I have also worked with collage, the introduction of transfers, the inclusion of elements of all kinds of materials directly into the paint so that its leaves residues among the pieces to give an added texture, a further haptic element. Some pieces have also been left outside during wind, rain, and afterwards the drying out of the sun, while others have been made during "blinding snowstorms." Even if it is not "visible" there is a residue of these encounters with the site/sight/cite as it travels through time and weather, through the effects of differing elements.

Made with "next to nothing" on a budget of "next to nothing" one finds in a sense--"everything," that is going on around one at any moment. "necessity is the Motherfucker of Invention" is one way I use to express what happens when one works with the "bare necessities."

To work "without" Walls in a world in which one is among Walls--physical and virtual, in that the Virtual is Walled off via wars, occupations, poverty, discrimination in the destruction of power grids and the cutting off of electricity to huge populations, and the physical Walls which Wall in large communities (Gaza, prisons, detention camps) and Wall Out others--gated communities, Green Zones, borders--is working with the cracks found among their disintegrations and disruptures.

This is the Poetry that exposes itself of which Celan, a survivor of the Concentration Camps, writes.

The Poetry of the Found, everywhere to be Found.

Haptic Visual Poems of Twilight Lowlight and Next to No light

From making rubBEings under all sorts of conditions I have been developing seeing with my hands and touching with my eyes. These are very good skills to have when working into the night now that it is getting dark out earlier and earlier each evening. In the pieces here I just ran my hands and fingers over the surfaces of trash cans, plaques, telephone poles and a clay impression, "seeing" them in the dark and rubBEing them on the spray painted or Xerox-copied images I had brought with me to work on. A few pieces were done in alleys where there was a bit more light from the occasional dirty dim orange-yellow glow of a street lamp. Some are from a sliced outer section of a huge truck tire I found and have hidden in some bushes in another alley. Those were made in almost total darkness.

I like a lot working in this way--not just that one is learning to see by hand--but that one is also learning to touch by seeing--so that walking along the eye instead of finding a relatively limited and stable world of flattened or rounded forms is suddenly embarked in a wildly shifting universe of textures in a myriad scales--from tiny pockmarks to a sense of

immense concavities--from gritty gravel feels to softness of skin and lips to jagged cold edges of metallic shards--eye moves among thousands of sensations, feeling them , caressing them, as if by hand--shaping them--while the hands in touching things are seeing them--rubBEing them with the lumber crayon a means of notation of both the seeing and the touching simultaneously--and via notation also evoking the sense of music and voices one hears with these exchanges among the senses . . . these pieces are for most part ones guided by the grid; as I wrote yesterday this is a way for me to work against the grain of my own impulses and habits and enjoy the tension between trying to "toe the line" so to speak and my natural character to be "out of line"--so the pieces once I finally see them by light of day or inside a brightly lit place--seem to me to be a dialogue of the "clean" and "dirty" . . . a dialogue literally "in the dark" . . . developed in the "dark room" of the outdoors of alleys and parks--and seen later on "by light of day"--to be seen/read/heard in a new way--from night before--
(btw--the spray painted backgrounds all done in the near darkness also--)

Haptic Visual Poetry of RubBEings--in the cold--& snow--& wind

Today we had the first snows here in Milwaukee. Temperatures to drop near zero--while I was out working I was informed it was 16 degrees. Winds have blown for days signaling changes on the way--and today they arrived--swirling gusts of full flaked snow--drastic drop in the temperatures--
Since I work by hand directly pressing paper to the material to be rubbed with one hand--and then holding lumber crayon in other hand--touch and temperature play a large part in my daily work outside. The cold will be soon affecting the ways I work--I will keep a log of these.
Through time the hands learn to see and the eyes learn to touch--I examine materials as they arise for possible rubbing--things that may look good to the eye do not work by hand and vice versa--one has to go back and forth in using both hands and eyes to tell if a given fence or telephone pole or raised letterings on dumpsters may be of use. The same goes for any surface in which there are cracks and knots and the swirled lines made by circling knots--
One learns that what may look good to the eye when rubbed by touch is nothing much at all--and one may feel by hand something that seems to be of great beauty--and then when rubbed by eye sight--it is nothing at all--just a mess.

RubBEings are a Haptic form of work--touch plays such a role--that I have of late done much work in the dark or near dark literally feeling my way--since it gets dark earlier, I have grown used to working by dimmer and dimmer lights, fading into darkness--this is a fascinating way to work--one has to use the hands as eyes--and yet one also knows that what may feel good to the touch is unpleasing to the eyes--so this working by touch--one begins to learn just how deep an impression or incision in wood or other materials made by--numbers and letters on telephone poles for example, burdened into the wood--or raises letterings--and then from this to being able to read by hand the heights of raised lines of wood--how high they may be before making truly a good series/set of lines on the paper--slowly but surely I find that I can by touch find what will be pleasing to the eye--it takes time and patience and much running of the hands over surfaces--that one cannot see.

I find this a purely Haptic approach--and that my rubBEings do feel to the touch differently in the almost invisible differences in the heights of the crayon wax on top of the paper--or the areas in white where it is incised--
One may read subtly by the touch the crayon wax on paper--and see with the eyes--the shifts in heights and shades and weights of the hands and crayon as it varies according to the raisings and lowerings of the materials-
The making and touching/reading of rubBEings are a way to introduce the Haptic element directly into visual poetry--a visual poetry in which the visual may be by touch--and the touch may be visual--- The Haptic element is important in what I work with daily--and is another means by which to extend visual poetry from the word/paper into the world of materials.
Concrete--materiality of the word--physicality of letters and words on a page--these names and phrases remain removed from the touch of the world and are abstractions. In working with the Haptic, one essays a finding through the working of a ways in which all these mere phrases may truly be a part of the world and visual poetry a lived experience, one not

RubBEings and Public Art, Art Made in Public Spaces among the Public

I hope in my work that there is conveyed a sense that a public space truly belongs to no one and is shared by everyone. This is in part why in making my work I collaborate directly with what is there in these spaces, so that they are present in the works literally, and calling from these worlds hidden in plain site/sight/cite all around one, everywhere to be found.

By using the simplest, very ancient and childlike techniques, by using found materials only, and working only in public spaces or in my room with things found in the streets, I hope that the work conveys what the meeting of the hand on one side of the paper with the ground on the other conveys in the creating of a collaborative work—no separations, no Walls, no deliberate or trained overlookings and unhearings—but an encounter, a "shock of recognition" and an awareness of the world under everyone's feet ("Look under your feet!"—Chuang-Tzu) as a shared space to be worked WITH. Necessity is indeed the Motherfucker of Invention, and in the ever ongoing non-recognition of others and of all that is hidden in plain site/sight/cite is their vanishing—and in that vanishing—these methods become a kind of guerilla survival toolkit, ways to keep open the communications with the grounds and beings of the everywhere found hidden all around one, the public spaces of a public without Walls, without separations, without Publicity—

A public of uncanny recognitions and encounters and creation with refuse as a way t refuse these endless barriers between peoples, between "art" and "life," between the privatized and the public, between the ground itself and those who walk upon it.

In An Art of Looking & "A Poem's Own Skies"
(Saturday 1 July 2006-Sunday 2 July 2006)

A line by Robert Smithson has haunted me for years:
"A great artist can make art simply by casting a glance." Often when this line recurs to me out walking around I start having fun with it, laughing and playing God--zap! my glance hath created an immortal masterpiece!--yeah--of about three seconds' duration! As much fun as the line's been, it's also provoked a good deal of thinking about an "art of looking" as Smithson calls it for me.
For a very long time I have been interested in looking as
a continual process of work rather than an end product as a work.
This grew out of wondering about situations of the impossibility of making a work, in which all that one can do
is continual work on the "art of looking" itself. It began when a child
sitting in a car in the January freeze in Vermont at the foot of
the Union Village Dam. Looking up I saw the rose colored
light of the late afternoon sun's rays direct on the brick
building atop the Dam. The building was backgrounded by
a fragile blue sky and white snow covered steep hills dense
with dark green-black firs. The rose glowing building
began to pour forth a form of musical sound and convey
in the visual forms of the windows, bricks, pipes, and shafts
a non-verbal language I understood, yet had no words
for. This experience lasted some minutes, until the light
began to fade. Afterwards, I felt an infinite sadness--I
wondered if all my life I would be seeing things I could never
describe or make an image of to show others. On the
other hand, it awoke my awareness and from then on I was
always living alert with the sense of these moments, sights,
and sites, cites being everywhere, anywhere possible to be found.
The strange sense of impossibility on the one hand of
conveying what was seen & heard and on the other the continual
possibility of its being seen and heard--through time
and a myriad situations have kept me working with an "art of looking" and listening
as a process and making all its own.
The question of the impossibility of making anything
to convey the seeing, looking--I think of this very much in
regards to people through time and in the present, this very
second, for all sorts of reasons, who are artists of seeing, yet
forbidden to make anything--a doubling of impossibilities.
I've been in places where I wasn't allowed to do any art work.
All it did actually was help me learn all the more how to see
and hear everything and anything continually more vividly.
I had already known what is what like to make things, though.
What if one never had? By physical disability, one's gender,
social class, ethnic, religious, racial background--never
allowed to do anything creative though perhaps a Picasso
a Sappho, Basho or Kahlo--all through history--and right now--
the multitudes of lives
with an "art of looking" without a making are staggering.
The paradox for myself in thinking continually of an

"art of looking" is that it comes with a sense of impossibility
which is also what creates its possibilities. That is, say you are forbidden to express,
or it is impossible to convey, what it is you see. All you have is an "art of seeing"--
then why not work on developing that continually in every situation?
In that sense, there opens a great deal of freedom that paradoxically one might not
know if one is always thinking of a fixed end product for what is seen.
For having a fixed end is itself a form of forbidding-by-defining. The art
object can be a prison in which the "art of looking" gets locked up
before it's had the chance to experience freedom. By this I mean the ways in
which thinking in terms of the object first begins to prevent seeing. Objects
create models and methods of seeing and art objects give an "Art looking" that
enables one to perceive what appear to be similar things in the world--
recognizable categories and familiar aspects, aesthetic moments and illustrations.
One sees what one searches for--"seek and ye shall find". A satisfying and confirming
process. Yet akin to walking about with blinders on.
This sort of "Art looking" views the world in terms of art objects--and so, I think,
limits the "art of looking". When you begin to think of your looking as the work,
it opens time and with it space. The study of the view immediately before one
is immense. The eye can move in and out, investigate the smallest details,
speed up and slow down--if there are objects or people in movement in the
view--studying their arrangements, shiftings, harmonies and dissonances-
the colors involved--rhythms of these--Bob Cobbing and i used to spend
a lot of happy walks simply sounding side walk cracks and discussing the changes
in the shadows of the same trees through the day on the same sidewalks
walked every day for a week. The most minimal situation can be explored
and studied. In the hospital first time i broke my back, on a fifth
floor, all we could see the top of one tree. It was September, fortunately, so the
leaves slowly changed--each day there was some subtle shift to observe. In
another place, often all there was to watch was dust motes in the light coming through
blinds--their eddies and patterns and minglings with cigarette smoke.
The amount of action and shiftings of colors, particles, speeds this involves
is fascinating extended through time.
When I first began collages,
wherever i walked i began cutting up and rearranging the world seen around me.
This became so automatic after awhile i didn't realize its possible consequences.
Then one day i saw a huge truck in my composition--cut it out entirely, pasted in
an empty street in its place--only to hear a friend shrieking my name--and
snapped out of my collage visions long enough to see the truck almost on top
of me and dive for the curve as it grazed my flying leg.
"I do not seek, I find" Picasso said. With an "art of looking" one is continually finding as
there are no sought for objects and examples standing in the way. This can lead to some
strange experiences. Very often one encounters a moment, a site, a sudden sight--a visual
poem, unexpected, hidden in plain sight, never before seen. An uncanniness--is the found
site/sight/cite found by an "art of looking"--or is it an already made work of art in itself,
created perhaps by one of those previous artists of looking? By working with the art of
looking, has one found what another's art of looking created by finding it previously?
Perhaps in some way, that person's "art of looking" had seen so intensely this site/sight/
cite that an energy residue remains, and one with an acute seeing is able to "pick up on it".
I wonder who this anonymous artist may have been? (Or is it any number of things--the
work of chance, nature, god, an experience of the uncanny, of deja vu . . . or "just my
imagination/runnin' away with me" as Smokey Robinson and the Miracles sing it.)
In an other way with "the art of looking" at times one feels that what is found is looking

back at one--a mutual recognition, an encounter . . . other times one feels one is moving in a landscape of scattered presences of "arts of looking"--what becomes ever more complex may be whether they come from oneself, from an other which one senses has imbued the sight/sight/cite with an energy of being seen by an "art of looking" or simply that the site/sight/cite itself has its own "art of looking" which is looking at one as one is looking at it. With an "art of looking" one is learning to live in time in a much different way--to be moving in and around time as inside space. This movement becomes ever deeper--in time, in space--freeing one slowly and steadily through continual work with the process from layer after layer of restraints. The process is really to exist ever more fully with an "art of looking" in time, continually. This form of freedom i became more conscious of from being in confined spaces for lengths of time-yet one also finds it in the confinements of definitions, categories, examples, and essays at controlling the histories of forms of seeing and making. To develop an "art of looking" in time is a way of continually "opening one's eyes", "keeping your eyes open". The independence of the "art of looking" brings one an independence which is needed to be really alive in any circumstances. Chuang Tzu said "Look under your feet!"--another way of saying "think on your feet". The "art of looking" vastly extends visual poetry found in the world, not restricted to the page, nor to the use of letters. It makes it a way of life.
Smithson writes:

A great artist can make art by simply casting a glance. A set of glances could be as solid as anything or place, but the society continues to cheat the artist out of his "art of looking," by only valuing "art objects." The existence of the artist in time is worth as much as the finished product
(The Writings of Robert Smithson NYU Press 1979 in " Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects" p. 91).

Of course one of the things I have thought about is artists of looking who never made a finished product. Yet in some way has their "art of looking" nonetheless left residues and affects through time? "Any critic who devalues the time of the artist is the enemy of art and the artist," writes Smithson. In that sense the "art of looking" is an overlooked area of great use for visual poetry. It is after all VISUAL poetry!

Petra Backonja in her provocative --and joyous--essay entitled "They Lives They Wish" has a very original art of looking at how poems are found in the world.

"Poets wish for their poems a certain life. But what of a poem's own skies?

. . . Not necessarily being mere marks on paper, poems have their extra-literary existence and may manifest as hearing loss or a birthday party. There was once a naked terrible poem that thought it wanted to be a war and so now it is.

. . . Poems, on the other hand, lead lives which, because we are not the sentient ophthalmoscopes we think we are, remain invisible to us, or camouflaged, or else common and plain like when the Polish Pope would speak Polish and "even" a dog named Rico knows 200 words.

Poems disappear, become influential like those men who go to the corner store to buy cigarettes and are never heard from again."

http://www.wordforword.info/vol9/Backonja.htm

I like this very much because the conventional idea of a poem having a life of its own is that it is read and made different uses of through time than its author intended. These are still literary lives of a poem. Here, the poem really does have a life of its own--it escapes, disappears, camouflages itself, metamorphosizes, wants to be a war "and so now it is." It hides in plain sight--"invisible to us" "or else common and plain". It takes an "art of looking" as Petra Backonja has developed it to find these poems.
Reading this essay again and again has greatly expanded my awareness in an "art of looking" in the way i have been working. It has given more energy and strength to my senses that we are continually moving among visual and other poetries, with lives of their own.
The poems Petra Backonja writes of living their lives in the world may be like those i find, in which i wonder if they exist as poems made by having already been seen by an art of looking, or are looking at me as i look at them. Then there are the poems one meets and works with together in making an other poem.
The "art of looking" and "a poem's own skies" i think have many confluences and open many possibilities for further looking and thinking.
Oddly a vision i have in mind often of an artist of looking is a man rowing in a galley, continually studying the blues of the skies and the seas.
"An art of looking" and "a poem's own skies" are ways in which visual poems and poems are not objects narrowly defined and confined but living entities. To see and live with these is a process in time, a way of living continually being found.

"Outsider Art/ist"--A RubBEings Gallery: Adventures in Seeing, Finding, Making--

Lately quite a number of people have written and also asked me in person when outside working on my rubBEings in the streets and various sites if I wouldn't put up a group of them all in one place.

This way interested persons could be see a range of the rubBEings for an idea of some of the things I have done working together with the found materials, lumber crayon and paper all sizes.
With some hoary old exceptions most of these pieces have been done in the last couple months, the most recent made last night. I have a chapbook I made for the occasion to commemorate being visited by two Police squad cars last week. Some of the usual "new to neighborhood concerned citizens" had seen me making rubBEings on parked construction equipment--cranes, trucks, a van--and called the cops saying there was man outside trying to steal tires and tools. I learned from the police they had said "a Black man" which goes to show you the racism--"see" a "crime" and "see" a "Black man"--or see a Black man and "see" a crime. Once I demonstrated what i was doing and showed how no sacred property is hurt at all in any way--and the police realized i was friends with the people working in the stores around the corner--they left with some friendly advice about not working too near the fall of night in the areas where equipment was parked.
(I always carry with me books or journals with my photo and name and my works in them--to show yes indeed this is a "real" endeavor--as opposed to my secret life of crime and terrorism--yes, one man thought I was trying to blow up "his" crane at the condo site he owns--flying on top of me and dragging me to the ground and screaming for help. Afterwards, when I had a chance to show him what I was doing, he profusely apologized and offered to buy me a coffee. I said I would rather just stay and keep working if he didn't mind. And of course--he didn't. I mean--he kinda owed me, after all. Of course, I was wearing all black clothes with my sweatshirt hood up as winter time--so can see how I might have looked suspicious bent over the immense wheel and tire of "his" gigantic

crane. As he said--"I thought you might be attaching a device." A piece of paper and a lumber crayon is what turned out to be his supposed device . . . but heck in this day and age one can't be too careful, right . . . so I had no bad feelings at all towards the man and reassured him I thought the whole event basically was a rather gallows humor comment on "Homeland Security" . . . only to realize that the word "gallows"--had unnerved the poor man all over again. "You're not going to press charges?" he asked. God no--all I meant was a sad and also funny comment on the state of things . . .

Two weeks ago a far less friendly officer stopped me while studying some things thrown out in an alley and making a "sketch" rubBEing on a corner of a scrap of paper. He was about ready to cuff me and take me downtown when a woman recognized me and came over screaming at the cop. Apparently there have been besides people "prowling"--I have yet to see any myself--again, the gifted sharp eyes of "concerned citizens"--and the cop thought I was "staking out places" as there had been a rash of small break-ins in the alley I was in at the time. So for some time I have avoided for the first time ever going down the beloved old alleys, until things are settled down.
Almost always, though, when people stop it is out of interest and it is for many of you that I am posting this, as well as for many letter writers. A great thing about working outdoors is one gets to meet a lot of people and learn a lot about them and the life of the city. As one makes rubBEings, the ground and letterings, forms, stones, tires, wood, metal are al speaking with one--and then the people come--and add their voices to the conversations and musics and sound poems moving among the most minute particles of a murmured sound to the most fervent rushes of the accelerations into noise.
"Lower limit speech, upper limit music" said the American poet Zukofsky. Yet that is only a narrow band width of the spectrums of sound from near-silence to noise . . . the rubBEings are notations of the larger bandwidths, though have yet long ways to go with this--is a direction one is moving in with the found materials---

There are several different ways of using the rubBEings here-{{images not included here}}- and in a few pieces you will note the writing is backwards, facing the person in the image. This is done on purpose, as that person is looking "out" towards us through these letterings--they will be of course facing the person "on the other side". (A second series I am working on among others at the moment of my "The Dead See Scrawls" pieces elaborates a bit on this having letterings facing towards the viewer on this side of the paper, and letterings facing the other way so are being faced by the person on the "other side".)
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The thing hidden in plain site/sight/cite are calling continually--but people tend to see only the monuments and large structures, the important looking embodiments of signs of "meaning". Whether these are accepted for what they are in the conventional sense, or "detourned" or "subverted"--they remain anchored to their conventions, codes, circumscriptions of inscriptions of meanings and words and images. Even when walking along thinking they are "seeing the street, the world"--how much does one see but what one is trained to see? One finds images in the world, structures, broken things, or sudden odd conglomerations of objects--and sees these as "art" because they already have been "art" in a book, a journal, on line, in fotos, a film . . .

As Leonardo Sciascia writes in "The Moro Affair"--the whole sequence of events with all its attendant uses of language--happened as though "already written".
The "already written" the "already art" and the already-self-subverting are more and more

what seems essential to be presented as forms and objects and language to be reflected upon--because they are already reflections. The more one recognizes in the world that which one is prepared and trained to see, the more one feels one is truly seeing. After all, does not "reality" confirm one's expectations, one's investigations? How can it not--when it is a reflection--already--of what it is one is seeking?
Yet since this is a hall of mirrors, it is as though what one is doing is kept hidden from oneself. One cannot see that what one is seeing--is simply oneself seeing a reflection.
The beauty of this is that there can be a continual "rediscovery" or "recovery" or in fact a suddenly deemed "discovery"--of what is already written, seen, heard, felt. The continual seeking for the new and continually finding what is already known--does this not confirm the infinite wisdom of the system which one is using . . . living by . . . believes in . . . because already one "understands it so well". "With an amazing insight--revealing the dark secrets of our inner worlds/worlds of appearances" and so forth.
Odd how with a simple touch of a button, a pen, a brush, a mouse, a mixing machine, a video camera-- one may turn a "dark secret" into a suddenly widely embraced truth . . . "an instant classic!!!!" "The most important new work since . . . " "An immediate addition to the new canon . . . "
Apparently the "dark secret" is something" already known"--so what is happening--is the "absolutely new and original" actually just a sort of electric cattle/brain prod that reawakens parts of the memory from forgetfulness into wide awakefulness and a rush of awareness that this "new" thing--is already "an instant classic"--i.e. it is "already part of the (classic) past".

Picasso said "I do not seek, I find." The way of rubBEings for me is one of finding--working with "necessity, the motherfucker of invention" as I call this constant companion----for one works with what is immediately there at the moment--no matter how obscure--one hopes that with endless cheerful idiotic and disciplined work one will be finding the things hidden in plain site/sight/cite--a universe of "dark matter" as the physicists call it--yet which is not perceivable--except by its effects--and certainly not really nameable or ownable . . .
The large things in the world which take up sight and then become their own self subversions reified as further manifestations of themselves--block views on the one hand-become walls---and create shadows of great interest on the other--it is what things are doing in the world which has the areas of as yet unfound possibilities as well as the lines of thoughts leading elsewheres--away from the centralities which breed death . . . not the immense structure or immediately seen streets-the "already seen, already written"---but what it is that they are effecting as reverberations into peripheries, among shadows shifting continually--and lines of site/sight/cite of poems of thoughts which are in continual particle and wave flux--with "skies of their own" as Petra Backonja writes--and all these things which are tearing and wearing down walls via the smallest dust grains and rust stains and wind worn corners into smoothnesses of the inner thigh--and the understanding that in the "artist's way of looking" (Robert Smithson) it is not the "art object" but the glance within the "time of the artist"--which becomes that which can create work by this glance alone--something not to be imprisoned in an object or nailed down in language--"a final glossary, therefore, cannot be made of words whose intentions are fugitive" as Burroughs writes . . .

The "outside", the "outsider artist"--is there really any such a thing possible anymore--an outside--especially in a hall full of mirrors---a world of self confirming reflections . . . endlessly reflecting about itself . . .
When one is in a prison, "outside" is the other side of a cell door, outside is through a great many doors--until--one is outside the walls . . .
If one began to think of the "outside" as the other side of a door--of the other side of the

eyelids . . . the other side of a wall--the other side of a piece of paper--from which the objects being rubBEed--are pushing on to the paper and making notations--while one is on the other side--the material's "outside"--applying the hands and pressing back--a rubBEings is the meeting, and a notation of this encounter, conversation, exchange of call and response--among two BEings each on the "outside" of the other--two outsiders working and in their encounter--creating the space of a third outside which is neither one nor the other--but a shared in the moment outside--and moving on--
But al this is just a bunch of words scratching at the top soil where something seems to be calling . . .
here, on to the rubBEings----

"Do you wish to be great? {No} Then begin from what is slightest. Do you plan to construct a high and mighty building? Then think first about the foundation of humility. {rubBEings--I would say--the found--the motherfucker of invention---no need for words too fine for such as oneself, hey--}--
"When people plan to erect a lofty and large building, they make the foundations all the deeper. But those who lay the foundation are forced to descend into the depths. {The poet's journey into the world of the dead? ------oh no,--even worse--a lot of hard dirty work! ho ho ho!}"--St Augustine

The rubBEings and found way is to descend into the depths--the outside--the slightest--where the foundations are--which are far more interesting than that building which one will never build--for what is it but another big prison?

reveries and rubBEings

Someone wrote once that the rubBEings activity of mine uses a method "at once childlike and ancient". I much appreciated this for rubbing is probably the earliest form of copy art, and I have often felt, been like a child working on the rubBEings. Actually i have often laughed at myself when an awareness will come that what one is doing is like child's play--working with the thick lumber crayon and in a form of trance or reverie rubBEing the markings in surfaces of all sorts.
And oddly, memories of childhood start to flood me at times. I suddenly am in a different zone of existence, freed from the shackles of the immediate and floating in an other space, yet anchored by the materials one is working with. They take on talsimanic features and become the points at which energy is released, an energy of a form of dreaming, reveries of the materials themselves. So it is that in rubBEing on a telephone pole one finds faces released from knots and hears sounds pour forth from the configurations of the grains in the wood, rings and ovals, singing with the movements of the hands. Often these events bring back the sense of wonder one had as a child, standing before anything, any scene, one could enter a dream found in the concrete, tangible world, a dream born of the encounter with the simplest materials. I often find these dreams coming back, memories and images of childhood dreamings when touching the different materials--wood, metal, plastic, glass, etc etc I had wondered if this isn' al due to my sense of humor at doing what a child does, a childlike form of working. Did that association trigger these memories and imaginings, suddenly so vivid and alive, long ago reveries of a child come back through the agency of touching an elemenatal material? I have wondered about this many times, for the expereince occurs and re occurs, comes out of the blue as it were, olut of the material and one is suddenly plunged again into a reverie that knows no time barriers.
In his POETICS OF REVERIE Gaston Bachelard writes of this--I have been very happy to be reading this book for it elucidates such events. Bachelard writes:

When reverie goes so far, one is astonished by his own past, astonished to have been that child. There are moments in childhood when every child is the astonishing being, the being who realizes the ASTONISHMENT OF BEING (in itlaics in the text) We thus discover within ourselves an IMMOBILE CHILDHOOD, A CHILDHOOD WITHOUT BECOMING, liberated from the geaar wheels of the calendar.

I imagine that everyone has some form of activity which must effect this return of the astonsihment of being. I know I find it in making the rubBEings especially.
These "reveries" pieces are of ones (cars, too) in a state of reverie.